

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contacts: Jed Davis (909) 758-8970 jed@homestrongusa.org

## Military Hero Receives Newly Renovated, Mortgage Free Home

Purple Heart recipient who served in Iraq and Afghanistan is surprised with home donation through the HomeStrong's Heroes Program

Donation made possible through partnerships with Bank of America, the National Community Stabilization Trust (NCST), MGR Real Estate and CBS Radio

**Victorville, Ca.** - On Saturday, November 9th, 2013 at 11:00 a.m., HomeStrong USA, a national non-profit organization, donated a newly renovated, mortgage free home to U.S. Army Sgt. James Miller. The donation - given in honor of Sgt. Miller's sacrifice and the service of all American veterans - came as a surprise to the entire Miller family.

Having previously served a tour of duty in Iraq, Sgt. Miller was wounded during an IED attack in Afghanistan while driving a truck on security detail. He was subsequently awarded a Purple Heart for wounds received as a result of hostile actions.

The attack would mark the beginning of a series of obstacles for Sgt. Miller. Since his return home, multiple health issues have plagued his wife and kids, resulting in nearly a dozen surgeries and several more lengthy hospital stays.

"This home means so much," said Miller. "We have gone through a lot in the past two years. This is the biggest stress relief that I could ever imagine. It's amazing."

## CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE SURPRISE HOME DONATION.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b190dtELRzc



HomeStrong USA - Veterans Day Weekend Donation 2013

"Sgt. Miller is a true hero," said HomeStrong USA CEO, Jed Davis. "He is the real deal - a man of courage who is loyal to his family and his country. It is our honor to surprise him with the keys to the

home."

On hand to surprise Sgt. Miller was his friend and brother in arms, Army Sgt. Sidney Baileye. The two men served alongside each other in Afghanistan, and were in the same vehicle that incurred the IED blast. He presented him with the most special of housewarming gifts - a flag that was flown over their military base in Afghanistan.

The donation was one of several homes given to military families this year through the organization's HomeStrong's Heroes program, which provides a path to affordable homeownership for local heroes. The innovative program allows HomeStrong USA to rehabilitate vacant properties to high standards, then donate the properties to local heroes or sell to them at 20% below market value, thus creating instant equity.

In addition, the program provides military families with access to ongoing financial education seminars and one-on-one housing counseling from USA Cares Certified Military Housing Specialists.

"We recognize that homeownership - a cornerstone of the American Dream - is not possible without the sacrifice of our service members," said Davis.

"We are humbled by the sacrifices of our brave men and women, and we are dedicated to creating affordable homeownership opportunities for them."

A strong advocate of veterans, CBS Radio promoted the donation event and informed veterans about the application process through its local stations: KFRG, 95.1-FM; KXFG, 92.9-FM; KVFG-FM, 103.1-FM; and KRAK, 910-AM.

"We are proud to join HomeStrong USA in its efforts to honor those who have served our country" said Harvey Wells, Senior Vice President and Market Manager for CBS RADIO. "They say that there is no place like home and we are happy to help provide that place for a military family."

This donation through the HomeStrong's Heroes program was made possible by Bank of America.

As part of Bank of America's efforts to help revitalize communities and support the housing needs of those who have served and sacrificed for our nation, the company has pledged to make up to 1,000 homes available nationwide through property donations to military veteran-support charities and other nonprofits such as HomeStrong USA. Bank of America has a long history of serving our troops, serving more than 2 million military customer households and employing nearly 6,000 active service members and veterans.

"Giving back to our military veterans in the form of homeownership is a tremendous honor for us at Bank of America. That is why we are proud to work with military related nonprofits such as HomeStrong USA to donate up to 1,000 vacant properties to our military service men and women," said Al Arguello, Inland Empire market president, Bank of America. "This is just one way we can recognize the profound sacrifice of our military service members."

Another integral organization to the HomeStrong's Heroes program is the National Community Stabilization Trust (NCST). Partnering with local non-profits, NCST assists with the acquisition and reuse of foreclosed properties, allowing organizations such as HomeStrong USA to rehabilitate the properties for veterans and dramatically improve the quality of life in local neighborhoods.

"Veterans that have served our country with valor and honor deserve to be welcomed back into our communities with safe, affordable, and accessible homes," said Craig Nickerson, President of the National Community Stabilization Trust. "Our organization is proud to be working with local partners like HomeStrong that are creating special housing opportunities for veterans, military service members, and their families."

To learn more about the November 9th donation and the HomeStrong's Heroes program, interested parties may call **(877) 647-8764** or visit <u>www.homestrongusa.org</u>.